

A
S E R M O N

O N

St. MATTHEW, Chap. IX. Ver. 12, 13.

Preach'd at the Parish Church of

ST. LAURENCE, near *Guild-Hall*,

APRIL the 26th, 1759,

BEFORE THE

President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and Governors

OF THE

MAGDALEN HOUSE

FOR THE

RECEPTION of PENITENT PROSTITUTES.

B Y

WILLIAM DODD, M. A. K

Lecturer of *West-Ham, Essex*, and *St. Olave's Hart-Street, London*.

Published at the Request of the PRESIDENT, &c.

HE THAT IS WITHOUT SIN AMONG YOU, LET HIM FIRST
CAST A STONE AT HER. JOHN viii. 7.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed by W. FADEN, for the CHARITY:

And sold by L. DAVIS and C. REYMERS, opposite Gray's-Inn, Holbourn.

MEMORIAL

St. Matthew, Chap. IX. Ver. 13.

Presented at the Parish Church of

St. Lawrence, West. Guild Hall.

April the 28th, 1899.

BEFORE THE

Parish, Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, and Governors

OF THE

MAGDALEN HOUSE

FOR THE

RECEPTION OF REPENT PROSTITUTES.

3
4
1
101



WILLIAM DOUGLAS, M.A.,
Librarian of the British Museum.

Published at the Request of the Paragon, &c.

Printed by WILKINSON & SONS, Ltd.,
15, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

THE END OF THE

THE GAY & SONS

Printed by WILKINSON & SONS, Ltd.,

15, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

TO THE
Right Hon^{ble} the Earl of HERTFORD, PRESIDENT.

The Right Hon^{ble} Lord ROMNEY,

Sir GEORGE SAVILE, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER GRANT, Bart.

Sir SAMUEL FLUDYER, Bart. and

Alderman,

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

ROBERT DINGLEY, Esq. TREASURER,

JOHN BARKER,

EDMUND BOEHM,

JAMES CROCKATT,

CHARLES DINGLEY,

EDWARD DIXON,

JOHN DORRIEN,

JOHN DUPRE,

ISAAC EELES,

JONAS HANWAY,

FRASER HONYWOOD,

THOMAS LIGHT,

Esqrs.

ROBERT NETTLETON,

THOMAS PRESTON,

WILLIAM REYNOLDS,

HUGH ROSS,

THOMAS SPENCER,

JOHN TOZER,

JOHN THORNTON,

SAUNDERS WELCH,

GEORGE WOMBWELL,

JOHN WEYLAND,

Esqrs.

The Annual COMMITTEE,

And all the other Worthy GOVERNORS and SUBSCRIBERS

To this Excellent and Useful Institution,

THIS

D I S C O U R S E,

Preached at their Request,

And now Published by their Order,

Is with all Humility, Respect, and Esteem,

Dedicated and Inscrib'd,

B Y

Plastow,
April 28, 1759.

The AUTHOR.

*Magdalen House for the reception of penitent prostitutes, in
Prescot-street, Goodman's-fields, April 12, 1759.*

A GENERAL ACCOUNT of the Receipts and Disbursements from the beginning of this Charity.

R E C E I P T S.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
General receipts to this day, including a lottery- ticket given, which was drawn a Prize of 500 <i>l.</i>	5616	7	9
Ditto annual	214	5	6
A Legacy from Miss HEYLIN	250	0	0
Work done by the women, as spinning, making sloop shirts, winding silk, embroidering of gloves, &c.	168	19	11
Found in the poor's boxes	61	2	0
	<u>6210</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>

D I S B U R S E M E N T S.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Repairs of building (formerly the London Infir- mary) consisting of four houses, fitting up the same in a convenient manner, with complete working-rooms, chapel, kitchen, wash-house, and offices	1065	5	3
Clothing and household linen already made for 130 women, inclusive of materials not yet made use of, value about 140 <i>l.</i>	403	11	10
Proper furniture for all the apartments, with beds and bedding, and furniture for the chapel	691	6	3
House-keeping: for provisions, and other household expences, since the opening the house, to the 5th of April last, for 128 women, 109 of whom now remain in the house, the rest having been discharged by reconciliation of friends, or being unfit for the charity.	304	9	2
Stationary, printing, and advertising	121	6	8
House rent, and salaries of chaplain, matron, stew- ard, porter, messenger, and nurse	164	0	0

Balance in hand *l.* 3560 6 0

P R E F A C E.

IN an age, when Vice is, in some respects, become fashionable, and that of lewdness especially treated with smiles, not degraded with due indignation; there can be no marvel, that an attempt like the present, should meet with some ridicule, and be liable to some objections, as well from the gay, as the grave; from the thinking as the thoughtless. And as there is a variety of motives, which may induce men to give to charitable institutions, so are there motives no less various, which may withhold them from giving; and of consequence, lead them to decry a design, solely because they mean not to support it.

But as we hold not, with a noble Lord *, *ridicule* to be any *test* of the truth; and conceive, that light mirth is as indecent as weak, where the life and salvation of fellow-creatures are concerned; we shall not be discouraged from any good purposes by the random shafts of the former, or shaken in any benevolent design, by the loud and unmeaning madness of the latter.

The success and encouragement, which the present institution hath met with, in the short time since its commencement, from the Great and the Good, abundantly speak its utility, and we are pleased to observe, that very few, if any charitable proposals, have made a more rapid progress in the same compass of time †.

As the purpose of the worthy Patrons and Managers of this Charity is only to do good, and to render an important service to *Religion* and their *Country*: they will never be inattentive to any observations of the wise and well-meaning: never be backwards to consider any objections, which speculation may propose; or to admit any useful hints, which seriousness and sobriety may urge for the advancement of the good work, and for the furtherance of its utility.

We remember, that when the *Plan* for this institution was laid before the world, some, either ignorant, as it should seem, of human nature, or averse to the benevolent design, urged, that “it was chimerical and absurd; — that

* Lord Shaftsbury.

† For this we refer to the general printed account of the charity.

no objects would ever present themselves : — or if they did, that the reformation of such was impossible.” — The doors of the *house* were no sooner opened, than this objection was powerfully removed indeed, by the *number* of pitiable sufferers, who flew joyfully to the first harbour, where they could be admitted : — and where, in full proof, that the reformation of such is nothing *ideal*, their behaviour, in the general, hath been excellent and exemplary : and all the signs and fruits of reformation, which could be fancied or formed, have and continue to shew themselves.

Surely they who have talked of this design, as “ of a scheme to wash *Æthiopians* white,” must have been very inattentive observers of human nature ; must have considered but very superficially the end and design of the religion of *Christ*.

For all the world knows the misery and distress of these objects : and every man that reflects on the true condition of humanity, must know, that the life of a common prostitute, is as contrary to the nature and condition of the female sex, as darkness to light : and however some may be compelled to the slavery of it, yet we can never imagine, every line of right and virtue defaced in the minds of all of them. — And indeed, as the *voluntary* entrance of those who are now in the *house*, is a sufficient proof of their weariness and detestation of this way of life, and a strong recommendation in their favour : so from many letters*, and many affecting incidents, which have already happened in the house, it appears, beyond all contradiction, that the nobleness of virtue, and the delicacy of sentiment, have been rather canker’d over, than blotted out : and upon the first remove of the filth, have shewn themselves in particulars, which would do honour to the most exalted state and ideas.

When the success of the institution rendered these objections, no longer possible : then, as nothing is so inconsistent as the spirit of opposition and malevolence, it was said on one hand, “ 1. That the design of the promoters of this charity was wholly to prevent the Vice of Fornication ” — and on the other, “ 2. That their purpose was favourable to the vice ; and if not meant to encourage and recommend lasciviousness, yet evidently productive of these consequences.”

For the *first* ; surely the objectors must have had a low opinion of the proposers of this institution, and supposed them men of very mean understandings to fancy, they could think of stemming the torrent of such an over-

* Concerning these a more satisfactory account may be had from Mr. *Dingley*, who is in possession of the manuscript letters referred to.

flowing vice, by providing a receptacle for a small number of the thousand victims, which are annually offered up in this metropolis to lust and destruction! — In truth, they are not so sanguine as to conceive, or so ignorant of human nature as to imagine, that a retreat for the few, who may be willing to retrieve and repent, will diminish the dominion of this all-ruling passion. The corruptions of human nature must first be totally eradicated; and the favourers of this vice need be under no apprehensions, nor join the infamous *bawds* and *panders* in the cry, as if their craft was in danger*. — But if they will not unite in the good design, nor, in just retribution, assist in providing an Asylum for such as may be called upon by their bodies or minds to forsake the paths of death; let them be intreated to curb their own evil propensities; let them be intreated not to add to the number of these miserable objects, already too too great — let them be intreated to consider the innumerable fatal consequences to public, private, and domestic happiness, which arise from unbridled lust, and a promiscuous commerce: and at least, for their own sakes, learn the practice of that virtue, which never leads her votaries to disease and distraction, to anguish of conscience, and future condemnation.

For the *second*; the characters of the worthy Gentlemen, who are concerned in this design, are too public and too well known, for the amiable practice especially of all domestic virtues, to dread any prejudice from the loudest voice of such slander. — But acquitting them of the purpose, let any man only consider the progress which this vice hath made in our nation; its general and fatal prevalence; and the many thousand women yearly perishing in all the extremities of disease and distress by means of it: let them only consider how our streets, for many years past, have been thronged, and every corner of our *metropolis* infested by these miserable wretches, to the shame of good order, decency, and religion: and then let them never fancy, that such a design can encourage; then let them be glad, that here, — but here only — an opportunity presents itself to save some of these poor sufferers from almost instant perdition.

* While such execrable methods are pursued, to entrap innocent and unwary girls, as are publicly avowed, and infamous bawds are suffered so to ruin and enslave, no prevention can even be thought of. — These arts are in general well known except to such as it most concerns not to be ignorant of them. But one of this infernal crew, with an impudence which is scarce to be parallell'd, hath lately hired the venal quill of some hackney writer to proclaim publicly to mankind his scandalous and horrid proceedings — and laid open some of those artifices, which may perhaps tend to another purpose, than the spirit of that pamphlet proves it written with. It will not be long doubted, that I refer to “the remonstrance of the *Pimp-general*” — Honourable Title!

In truth, this objection might as well be urged against every other charitable institution; nay indeed, I have heard it urged against some, which seem least liable to its force. And you might, with as much reason, suppose, that a mason would be careless, how he mounted the ladder, and indifferent, whether he fell down or not, and broke a leg, because there is an *hospital* ready to receive him; as that a woman should *commence* * prostitute, because there is a house of *penitence* and *industry* to receive her in woe and distress.

Different, far different are the motives, that are urged, and the prospects that are presented, when seduction spreads its lawless snares, and the yielding fair one is introduced to the temple of forbidden pleasures. Golden dreams, and gay delights lull her fancy and her conscience: and she thinks of nothing else, till she awakens from her sleep — and finds herself undone!

But supposing the present design well plann'd — the purpose good — and the effects more admirable than could have been expected, even by the most sanguine favourer of this charity. — Some will yet object again, and we would wish every objection removed, — “that they are doubtful what may become of these women; and whether they may not return to the same course of life, when removed from the house.”

We must be allowed here to rejoin, that insisting too much on this point, in the present infant state of the design, is rather unkind: and especially, if it be so insisted on, as to be made an objection against it. Let those, who raise it, rather employ their time and their thoughts, as they would wish to unite in the good of their fellow-creatures, how best to remove it, and propose, whatever may seem reasonable to themselves on this head: and I believe, I may take upon me to say, that all such proposals will be received with due deference and esteem.

But surely they must not have seriously reflected on the influence of religious principles, who lay too much stress on this objection. All parents and friends suppose the advantages of education great; and the bias of religious principles such, that it is sufficient to preserve the mind from deviating into the paths of error and folly. If not, why are we so solicitous for giving our children good education, and an early tincture of virtue? — And why should we not presume the same in regard to these women? — Many of whom have entered the house, utterly ignorant of and uninstructed in the religion of their

* The reader will observe that I say *commence*: — That some of the miserable wretches who are obliged to that hardest of all service, the walking nightly in the streets, may sometimes in their *dissembled* jollity, boast of the *Magdalen* house, no man can wonder; and the less so, as they are so frequently reminded of it, by passengers of every sort. But the discerning and judicious will perceive that this can be no objection to the *house* itself.

P R E F A C E

country : strangers too much to their God and their Saviour, the glad tidings of whose mercy is as refreshing balm to their souls. Now as the Christian Religion, in such circumstances, is a perfectly new thing, great and admirable are the effects, which may reasonably be expected from it. And as the most diligent care is taken to instruct them in the sound principles of the faith, no friend to that faith must doubt the good effects of such instruction.

Besides, after the time of their probation, which will be more or less, as proper behaviour may dictate, and opportunities offer ; it is not to be doubted, but many friends will be reconciled and receive them : Some have already been reconciled :—that upon the exactest knowledge of their characters, (which may be had here without the least deception) many worthy persons will employ them as servants, which will be but an act of ordinary justice : Some may become useful and faithful wives ; and as being habituated to industry, and taught many useful branches of employment in the house, they will moreover be enabled to procure their own bread : and that more especially, as it will be the care of the Directors of this Charity, so to fix those in future life, who shall gain their esteem by proper conduct, and so to occupy the little sums they may gain * during their stay in the house, as to enable them the better to procure an honourable subsistence. For it is well known, that many of these unhappy women, who have once lost their character, have no possible opportunity to get their own bread, however able and desirous they may be, thro' the natural reluctance there is in the generality of people to employ them ; nay, indeed, we might say, thro' the almost unavoidable impossibility of employing them. So that, when they leave the house, stor'd with good principles, and with an habit of industry, and are put into a way to procure a livelihood, there can be no doubt, but they will do so. And should some miscarry out of the number, yet if some, if half only, are restored and saved ; certainly it will well repay all the trouble. And I cannot but remark in justice to the women now in the house, that they are truly sensible of the necessity of industry : and the account of what they have already gained, which hath been published †, is a sufficient proof, that they have not been, that they are not idle. And this account may serve also to corroborate another remark, which was made, when the Plan was first laid before the world ; that greater good may be done at a less expence in this undertaking,

* Every woman is intitled to a part of what she gains by her labour in the house. See the Rules Of *Employment* Numb. 1, &c.

† It appears from this account, that from the commencement of the charity, *August* 10, 1758, to *April* 12, 1759, the work done by the Women, as spinning, making caps, shirts, winding silk, embroidering of gloves, &c.—amounts to 168 *l.* 19 *s.* 11 *d.*

than in almost any other charitable scheme : since it is to be supposed, that, when the whole is duly regulated, the women will nearly maintain themselves.

This may serve as an answer to the objection under view : but I must add besides, that a due attention will be had to the demands of our colonies abroad : where such, as are willing, upon the best advantages and proposals, will be transferred at the discretion and direction of the Governors.

The great decrease of our people is a subject of common observation : and doubtless one source of it is that abominable lust, and prevalent promiscuous commerce of the sexes, which, to the prejudice of honourable Matrimony, so notoriously abounds. And as very many of the objects in the *Magdalen House* are extremely young, the preserving them from that immediate destruction into which they must otherwise have fallen, it is hoped, is an object not unworthy men who love their country, and wish to promote its happiness. — And as many of them have been deluded, in the most *scandalous* manner, some, I may say without a figure, almost in their *hanging-sleeves*, and have been kept purposely in black and total ignorance of the crime, to which they were unwittingly introduc'd : surely, it is but a debt we owe to such, to give them the means of instruction, and *one* chance at least for eternal life, which they could otherwise never have found.

If, as some have fondly advanced, an attempt of this kind be *methodistical* ; let those persons be told, it would well become us all to be *such* Methodists. — Indeed this little wild bolt of weakness, scarce deserves to be mentioned ; except to remark the absurdity of some sort of people, who think it sufficient to decry a good man, or a good work, if they brand it with the name of *Methodist*. This surely is most injudicious : since it is giving the highest honour to the people whom they mean to condemn, by supposing, that real virtue, and substantial piety, is only to be met with amongst them. — However, be it known, that nothing of *Methodism* or *Enthusiasm*, hath, or ever will have place, we trust, in this Design. The Gentlemen concerned in it, have knowledge too real, and piety too solid, to countenance or encourage any thing weak, wild, and blasphemous. — And tho' they are not ashamed to think the doctrines of the Christian Religion essentially necessary to be taught in all their plainness to the *Penitents*, with whom deepness of learning, or vast reach of thought, is by no means necessary ; yet they will always take care so to provide, that imputations of this sort may be only the blasts of calumny, or the inane effusions of ignorance and inattention.

Noble minds are always the most free from envy ; this is a baneful plant,
which

which grows most luxuriantly in the worst soils. But it is well, that the present undertaking, can never be affected by the malevolence of the lower sort, who may regret such a provision, for their miserable, and by them judg'd utterly unworthy, fellow-creatures, but will never be able to prevent it.— Sometimes too, there is a stern severity even in virtue, which knows not to forgive failings, whereto itself is a stranger. And full often we find, that men can be extremely rigid to faults of which they themselves are guiltless; while they harbour sins equally odious and destructive in their bosoms, and can very readily pardon and pass over these, quick-sighted to the mote in their brother's, very dim to the beam in their own eye. To the latter of these, we could wish to commend our Saviour's conduct in the case of the woman caught in Adultery and advise those *who are without sin* themselves *to cast the first stone*. To the former, with all the winning mildness of the father to the *eldest son* in the parable, we would reply, *It is meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother*, — thy fellow creature, and fellow Christian, — *was dead and is alive again; was lost and is found!*

Thus much seem'd requisite to urge, over and above what follows in the *Sermon*, and which it was not so convenient to add there. And I have only to request my readers favourable Regard, which I shall not doubt to obtain, when the novelty and niceness of my subject is considered.—I must not however withhold my acknowledgments from the noble and worthy Supporters of this Charity, for the kind opinion they were pleas'd to express of this my endeavour to forward their useful design. And could I presume, that the discourse might meet with a reception near as favourable from the *Press*, as from the *Pulpit*, I should be happy. “But the ear is a favourable judge: a reader we know is severe and inexorable. ‡”

Satisfied however, in the sincerity of my intention: assur'd, that to give the least offence is at the utmost distance from my design: and desirous to be as instrumental, as my station will admit, in the great work of benevolence and love, I commit it to the world, and to the patronage especially of the *Friends and Governours* of this Charity; at whose request, it was *preach'd*;—an office, which, they can bear me witness, I strove much and long to commend to one of superior station and ability—and at whose command and desire, it is now *published*: heartily praying, that the Divine Grace may accompany it, and this good Work: and crown all the generous instruments of it, with length of days, riches, and honour here below, and with immortality and glory, in the world to come.

‡ A remark from *Lawson's useful lectures concerning Oratory*, pag. 100.

A P R A Y E R for the use of the MAGDALEN C H A P E L.

FA T H E R of mercies and God of all comfort, who hast sent thy Son *Jesus Christ* into the world, to save that which was lost ; we praise thy holy name for the bountiful provision made in this place, for the spiritual and temporal wants of miserable offenders : beseeching thee so to dispose our hearts by the powerful working of thy blessed spirit, that through sincere repentance and a lively faith, we may obtain the remission of our sins, and all the precious promises of thy Gospel. Awaken those who have not yet a due sense of their guilt : and perfect a godly sorrow where it is begun. Renew in us whatsoever hath been decayed by the fraud and malice of the devil, or by our own carnal will and frailness. Preserve us after escaping the pollutions of the world, from being again entangled therein ; and keep us in a state of constant watchfulness and humility. Forgive, as we do from our hearts, those who have injured us : and grant to all who have seduced others, or been seduced themselves into wickedness, that they may forsake the evil of their doings, and *live*. Make this house a blessing, we pray thee, to the souls and bodies of all its inhabitants, and a glorious monument of thy grace, abounding to the chief of sinners. Strengthen the hands, direct the counsels, reward the labours and the liberality, of all who are engaged in the government or support of it : and increase the number of those, who have a zeal for thy glory, and compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way ; that many may be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God, through the merits and mediation of *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

St.

St. MATT. ix. 12, 13.

AND WHEN JESUS HEARD THAT, HE SAID, THEY THAT ARE WHOLE NEED NOT A PHYSICIAN; BUT THEY THAT ARE SICK. — BUT GO YE AND LEARN WHAT THAT MEANETH, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE: FOR I AM NOT COME TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS TO REPENTANCE.

NOTHING can be conceived more amiable than the character, nothing more benevolent than the design, of the great Redeemer of the world. The religion he hath instituted is the most agreeable and correspondent to the necessities of mankind: the example he hath set, the most conducive to that perfecting our Nature, which is the end of our Being, and the foundation of our felicity.

That Virtue is preferable to Vice: that, if there be a God, he must delight in Virtue: that, what he delights in, may reasonably expect to be happy; was the general persuasion of the best and wisest Heathens. But these opinions left them only in sad disquietude and uneasy suspense: since the prevalent corruption of human Nature permitted very little satisfaction to arise from the contemplation of Virtues, defiled with innumerable blemishes: for which they were

utterly ignorant whether pardon might be obtained at all : or if obtained, in what manner the Deity could be atoned and made placable. This held them, as it were, all their life time subject to bondage : and made death, as one of the ablest of them calls it, “ of all dreadful things the most horribly dreadful.”

These clouds are remov'd, and this darkness dispell'd, by that life and immortality which is brought to light by the Gospel. And, to the unspeakable comfort of our souls, we perceive the Son of God himself mov'd, by the most affecting benevolence, to espouse our cause, to purchase our salvation, to proclaim our pardon: and making a revelation of the sovereign Will completely adapted to our wants, perfectly dispersing our doubts and our fears, and inspiring us at once with the most pleasing confidence and the warmest love.

The words of the text serve well to shew us the admirable disposition of our Saviour, and the important end of his appearance amongst us. And as that disposition was the most amiably benevolent and compassionate : and that end the salvation of repenting sinners : there surely can be nothing more proper to engage our attention at present, when we are assembled to promote and encourage an undertaking of which BENEVOLENCE and COMPASSION are the noble *Foundations* : of which the SALVATION of LOST and RUINED SOULS is the glorious *End*.

I shall take occasion therefore from the words of the text,

I. Briefly to set forth the *End* and *Excellence* of the Christian Religion. And,

II. To shew the exact and pleasing conformity of our present *institution* to it: the utility whereof, and the many motives that should urge us to a generous assistance of it, will conclude the present address. Wherein I shall need all that candour and favourable attention, which a subject so new and so delicate may justly claim. And permit me to hope, that as I tread first, by your appointment, in this trackless path, you will make the more indulgent allowances.

Ist. Then let us take a general view of the *end* and *excellence* of the Christian Religion.

And certainly that *end* is the most noble that can be fancied, the most commendable that can be conceived. It is nothing less than the recovery of mankind from ruin and wretchedness: than the restoration of a fallen world to favour and felicity, with the author of their existence and the fountain of all good.

The Scriptures set this end before us in terms the most expressive and the most pleasing. We are told in them, that *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that, whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life.*—We are told that this divine and only begotten Son *came into the world to save sinners.* Nay and he himself throughout the course of his ministry utter'd only

pathetic invitations to the *weary* and *heavy-laden* to come to him, and find mercy and *life* ; to take his *easy yoke*, and receive *rest* and tranquillity. And in the words of the text, you perceive what kind encouragement fell from his blessed lips, fully expressing his benevolent design, and engaging the humble penitent to access and confidence. *They that are whole*, (said he to the malevolent Pharisees, who objected to him, because they saw him eat with Publicans and Sinners) *they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick*. “Murmur not therefore, ye Scribes and Pharisees, that I eat and converse with Publicans and Sinners: my business is with such: and the end of my coming into the world was the salvation of these. I converse not with them to lull them in fatal security ’midst their vices, or to contract any taint from the contagion of their impurities; but as the *physician* visits the chamber of the sick, and is occupied amidst the couches of the languishing and distressed: so do I, as the great physician of the soul, seek out the sick and diseas’d in mind; and offer health and salvation to the children of men, suffering under a malady the most mortal and inveterate, the malady of *sin*.—And what physician in cases of distress and danger stands upon the niceties of forms, or the exactness of punctilios? Why then do ye marvel, and murmur that I, in the like extremities, act in the like manner?—Go ye, and learn what that meaneth, which

which God deliver'd by his prophet of old*, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*,—I will have mercy, RATHER THAN sacrifice: where the one or the other must be omitted, let MERCY, by all means, let the work of compassion, beneficence, and love be preferred to SACRIFICE, to instituted forms, and merely external ordinances: which tho' necessary in themselves, and highly useful, as ordained of God, and as means to an important end, must yet never destroy that end, but give place and preference to it: for of all things *mercy*, acts of humanity and benevolence are most pleasing to the God of love: and of all acts, as being the most humane and beneficent,—the salvation of lost sinners from destruction and death. And this is the great work for which I came into the world, this is the great end I have in view to accomplish, *I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*"†

There is one remark, which from a review of this apology of our Saviour to the Pharisees, naturally ariseth in the human mind: and the more naturally, as daily experience gives us unpleasing proof of it; which is, the much greater readiness and willingness, (if I may so say,) in the sovereign Lord of the world to pardon offences, and to blot out the remembrance of them from his book, than is but too commonly found amongst fellow-creatures. Great offences, and

* *Hosea* vi. 6.

† See Dr. *Whitby*, and the other commentators for a full explication of this passage.

deep blots in life are frequent'y treasured up in the tables of human memory : and, however repentance and a thorough change of conduct may witness a renew'd life and a pardon'd state, we find men but too apt to recollect the old grievance ; and too backward to forget and to cancel what God hath forgotten, and long since freely forgiven.

The sense of our own frailty ; the knowledge of the Almighty's ready pardon, and the consideration of the great end which brought the Saviour into the world should teach us another conduct : and inspire us with mutual forbearance, and that feeling compassion, which above all things dignifies and distinguishes *human* nature.

And surely a brighter example we cannot have before our eyes, than in that incarnate God, who hath set us the pattern, and whom it is our duty, as it will be our happiness, to imitate.

Mov'd with tender pity towards the children of men, he disrobed himself of his glory, and assum'd human nature in its lowest form : *Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will towards men*, was the gladsome song which the heavenly chorus echoed at his birth : *Good-will* towards men influenced his whole life, and shone beautifully display'd in his every action. When the children of affliction surrounded him, and he beheld the tears of distress, his generous heart was mov'd at the call of compassion : he saw ; he pitied : he reliev'd.—None ever requested his aid and found a repulse :

repulse: none ever implor'd his mercy, and were rejected in their suit. He refused no company: he declined no fatigue; he shrunk from no danger, whenever he might administer relief to the souls or the bodies of men. Unwearied in love, he went about diffusing peace and blessing: and as he came into the world to save sinners, so he left no means untried, no motives unurged, to call them to repentance and pardon: and at the end, after having done all to gain and restore a lost world, he crowned his mighty benevolence, by an act superior to all praise,—He died for sinners!

Of the *excellence* of a religion like this, whose *end* is so eminently noble, whose *author* is so great and so good, the only begotten and eternal Son of God, the perfect pattern of every laudable and heavenly affection—of the *excellence* of such a religion, why need we speak? we must all feel it: and to be happy, we must experience it.—But who can help remarking, from the slightest view of it, the great importance of human souls, and the high value which the God, who made us, is pleas'd to set upon his rational creatures? Rather than they shall perish, his own Son shall become one of them, suffer for, ransom, and redeem them. A thousand and a thousand pathetic calls and invitations shall be given them: nay, and the ever blessed Spirit itself shall be commissioned to awaken and inhabit, to comfort and to guide them. Even the holy angels are introduced

duced as interested in their welfare; and heaven itself, with its supreme inhabitant, represented, as partaking in the joy of souls restor'd : *There is joy in heaven, and before the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth* ; one sheep, that is found, one son that is restored to life. And can we conceive a higher notion of the value which the father puts on the least of his reasonable creatures ? His highest angels have charge of them : his only begotten son lives and dies to save them, and himself condescends to share in the joy which the heavenly beings are filled with on their recovery !—Need I then say, how much it becomes, how amiable and honourable it is in us, in human creatures, to join in and partake of this celestial joy, not only by affording it on our own account, but by labouring to increase it by our benevolent concern for the recovery and salvation of others ?

I would just make one remark more on the *excellence* of the Christian religion ; which is, that tho' it affords abundant consolation to the *returning* sinner ; yet it gives not the least countenance conceivable to sin itself. Our Saviour came, he tells us, as a physician to *heal* the sick, as a shepherd to seek and to *save* that which was lost, as an almighty redeemer to call sinners to *repentance*. *Repentance* can alone admit to or render us capable of his favour : while we continue in the practice of Vice, and in contrariety to his holy laws, we have no room to hope for, we have no ground

to

to expect his pardon and grace. Of which would we partake, undissembled contrition must lead us to his throne, and a perfect reformation, in a renew'd life, witness the sincerity of our minds and the reality of our profession.—And they be assur'd, who lead you to hope for *pardon* without *penitence*, and to depend on an enthusiastic *faith* without *fruits*, or a *righteousness without works* (a doctrine we have heard but too lately enforc'd *) lead you to depend on that which hath no existence, and to deceive yourselves with a delusion, which is of all others most dangerous.

So that you may observe, with great pleasure, that the Religion of Christ proposeth, with the most winning benevolence, comfort and consolation to sinners the most afflicted, and to souls the most deprest; while it encourageth not the least appearance of iniquity; but recommends the most solid and rational piety in a system of laws, the most pure and the most perfect, that the earth ever saw; upon motives, the most affecting and persuasive; and under sanctions, the most holy, awful, and formidable.

This may suffice to shew the *end*, and the *excellence* of the Christian institution; which might indeed be consider'd in various other lights, and extensively survey'd in all its other inimitable parts, did not the time and the design, we are met to encourage, render it the less seasonable. I cannot

* In a weak and obnoxious Sermon preach'd by the Rev. Mr. Elliot, Chaplain of St. George's Hospital, intitled *Encouragement for Sinners; or Righteousness attainable without Works.*

however fail to observe, that so striking is the beauty of the Religion, we profess, that it hath extorted, as it were, unwilling praises from the pen of a late noble writer*, who applied all his wit and his parts to oppose and degrade it. For *HE* acknowledgeth that it is *a most amiable and useful institution: whose natural tendency is directed to promote the peace and happiness of mankind*:—that it contains all the duties of natural Religion, and teacheth them in the most plain and simple manner;—that it is one continued lesson of the strictest Morality, of Justice, of Benevolence, and of universal Charity:—That, as its moral precepts are excellent, so its positive institutions are not only innocent but profitable, and extremely proper to keep up the spirit of Religion;---that it is a most simple and intelligible rule of belief, worship, and practice, &c.

And now if even an enemy could bear such a testimony to it, how much doth it behove us to bear a more useful testimony to it, by the integrity of our lives, and the exemplariness of our practice?

II. And you, worthy hearers, are ready to bear that testimony, I am persuaded, by your appearance in this place for the promotion of a charitable design, surely of all others most conformable to the nature and end of the Christian Religion.

* Lord Bolingbroke, from different parts of the fourth volume of whose works the passages following are extracted.

That *end* you have heard from the mouth of the benevolent author of this religion himself, is “ the salvation of sinners :” that salvation, you perceive is to be effected, “ by bringing sinners to repentance :” and your great lord and master hath shewn you a pattern, and left you to imitate an example of the most tender compassion and unwearied benevolence in this important work. Your present laudable Design is a noble copy after his example---Tender compassion, and the most disinterested benevolence have mov’d you to provide the means of repentance, and so the means of salvation for many miserable souls, who, without this provision, must perish in inevitable destruction. Thus are you happy in treading in the steps, and being fellow-workers together with the God of your salvation.

’Tis true that to common and superficial observers of things, nothing seems a more detestable object, more worthy our hatred and scorn, than a common and Pestilent Prostitute.---And indeed were those in that miserable condition, either plac’d in it by their own choice, or detained in it, by their own free will : had a vicious inclination at first introduced, or did the same vicious inclination continue them in it, amidst repeated opportunities to retrieve and return : we would then grant, they were utterly unworthy the least compassion, and more beneath humanity than the Beast that perisheth.---But when we are fully convinc’d, that different, far different is the truth of the case, then compassion pleads

their cause, and humanity urgeth us to their succour and redress.

For tho' the great author of our being hath, for wise and good ends, implanted the same passions in either sex, and therefore transgression is as possible, and of consequence as excusable on the weaker side, as it is on the stronger: yet fact abundantly demonstrates to us, that men for the most part are the Seducers, and the generality of those, who now claim our aid, have been introduced to their misery, by the complicated arts of seduction, and by every unjustifiable method, which cruel and brutish lust suggests to the crafty seducer.

And it is well known, how much harder the case, in this particular, is with the female sex, than with our own.—One false step for ever ruins their fair fame: blasts the fragrance of virgin innocence, and consigns them to contempt and disgrace! while the author of their distress may triumph in his villany! and——shame to human nature—not be branded with one mark of reproach for the ruin of a fellow-creature.

And when once, by whatever unhappy means undone, the lovely wretched outcast hath no resource, no redress: but must fall from shame to shame; from sorrow to sorrow: fall lower and lower in the pit of foul misery, and drudge in the labour of odious prostitution, to preserve a burthensome Being from famine and from death.

Thus

Thus soul and body are lost at once : and an useful member cut off from the community in early youth, and without having done good, but after having diffused much evil amongst her fellow-creatures—In *early youth* indeed, very many of the unhappy objects now in the *house*, being under fourteen years of age : and a great part debauch'd and introduc'd into this wretched way of life, before that age*, and of course, before nature and inclination could have any part in their crime. And it is greatly more than probable, that of these objects *sixty* in an *hundred*, or more, would have been dead in less than two years, and many of them who are *now* healthy and happy in the house, have been *now* suffering in the miseries of future condemnation !

To prevent this, as far as you may, and to provide some relief for sufferers so truly pitiable, is the benevolent and humane motive, which hath engaged you my worthy Friends and Brethren, the GOVERNORS and PROMOTERS of this design, to unite your generous efforts, and to join hand and heart in the good cause.

And what cause can more deserve encouragement,—what charitable institution be calculated to do greater good ? for this extends itself to the *souls* as well as the *bodies* of our fellow-creatures : and as much more noble and excellent as

* In a paper of our worthy Treasurer's now before me, and written some time since, I read, " Out of an *hundred* girls, now in the *Magdalen House*, above a seventh part have not yet seen their fifteenth year ; several are under fourteen, and one third of the whole have been betray'd before that age."

an immortal soul is, than a perishing body ; so much more noble every institution which extends to the welfare of the former, than those which extend only to the welfare of the latter. The great success this charity hath hitherto met with abundantly confirms this opinion.

Permit me sincerely to congratulate you on this success, which hath thus far crown'd your commendable undertaking. If they who turn one soul to light and to righteousness cause joy in heaven, and shall *shine as the stars for ever and ever* ; what may they reasonably expect, who, mov'd by the justest motives, actuated by a sincere love to Christ, and a true compassion to their fellow-creatures, are happily instrumental in the salvation of many souls, are happily instrumental in saving numbers from that death eternal, which, without their kindly assistance, they could never, humanly speaking, have avoided ?

And such, we have the utmost reason to hope, will be, already is the consequence of your charitable provision for these unhappy daughters of woe and distress. I doubt not it delights *your* hearts---for it must delight every heart---to behold and observe the striking contrast, when you visit the dwelling and the House of God, where these rejoicing Penitents share the blessings of your mercy. To behold the decent and orderly behaviour of so many fellow-creatures late abandoned to every calamity, who of their own *free-will* have sought this retreat, and thus shewn their dis-
ap-

approbation of Vice, by the only method in their power---to see them cloath'd in health and neatness, who but now were languishing under disease, and cover'd with foulness and filth---to hear the tongues sweetly tuning forth the praises of the Redeemer, which late were hoarse with oaths, and empoison'd with lasciviousness : to hear from their mouths only earnest prayers and joyful thanksgivings ; to see from their eyes the flowing tears of penitence and remorse : and to behold in their hands the instruments of chearful industry and labour ; instruments of industry in hands, that were wantoning in pernicious indolence, and impell'd perhaps to the extremities of theft---To see these things, must convince you of the great utility of your design, and chear you with the comfortable reflection, that already you reap some fruits of your beneficence.---May those fruits be increas'd ten fold here and hereafter!

Nothing great and good can be carried on without some opposition : nothing great and good was ever attempted in any age, but malevolence would find something to object, and Envy, with her jaundic'd eye, would peep out something to caluminate and censure. But this so far from cooling our ardour in honourable pursuits, should enkindle and enflame it. And I am perswaded, that you, *Gentlemen*, have too much fortitude and true elevation of heart to be shaken from any good purpose, by the weak sounding of calumnious breath.

In

In truth human works are so imperfect, and the very best institutions so liable to some defects and abuses, that nothing can be attempted or proposed, wherein some evil may not probably mix itself with much good. And whoever should refuse to enter upon any excellent work, till every probable or possible objection of scrupulosity was removed, would hang in the hesitancy of doubt all the days of his life, and waste useful time and talents, in the fruitless inquiries of inactive speculation. We must advance to action with all reasonable precaution : proceed with all imaginable activity and care : and obviate with all wisdom and sagacity every objection, which experience may find prejudicial to the progress of the purpos'd institution.

The objections * indeed rais'd against this undertaking have been, and are so slight and insignificant, that they deserve not to be mentioned. Its utility and present great advancement, above all other arguments, answer every cavil. And whoever are yet but ill convinc'd of its advantage, will be far more strikingly, far more feelingly convinc'd of it by a sight of the comely order, and decent appearance found in the public worship, at the *Chapel* of the House (where many have *lost* their objections, and *felt* its utility) far more than from any thing I can urge on its behalf. --Yet surely, if any thing be useful ; if any thing

* These, however trifling, it hath been thought proper not to pass over, and therefore they are obviated in the *Preface*, to which the reader is referred.

be excellent ; if any thing be praise worthy ; if any thing becomes us as men ; if any thing becomes us as members of the civil society ; if any thing becomes us as Christians ; —it is to save from utter and inevitable misery the souls of poor, abandoned, wretched fellow Christians, who have no other resource, no other means of relief : It is to preserve from present and afflictive death, the bodies of many young and perishing fellow-creatures ; it is to take from our streets, the shame of our community, the instruments of foulest pollution, and the most poisonous contagion : it is to restore to the state many useless members ; and to introduce to health and to industry, to happiness and to heaven, many who could otherwise neither ever have been employed, nor ever restored.

Let me not doubt then, that all of You, who hear me this day, will readily and chearfully join in the beneficent work ; and contribute as much as you can towards the perfection and support of so useful a design. At least if you mean not to promote, do not injure it, and endeavour to prevent its salutary effects by futile objections, and useless insinuations. —For, as, beyond all controversy, the intention of the worthy persons, who have engaged in it, is excellent and deserving the highest applause ; as their characters are the most respectable ; and, permit me to say, not only an ornament to this noble undertaking, but to this *Metropolis*, also, which is

D. itself

itself an ornament in its public charities especially, to human nature, and to Christianity ;---As these things are so, every good and generous heart should tenderly consider their motives, and wish well to their design ; and with a candor, which is always pleasing, and will ever be acceptable, should labour to promote, far as they may, and think of means to further, not of objections to discourage so benevolent an undertaking.

Were you to behold a poor harmless animal, fallen into distress, and suffering in misery, and were able to reach out your hand, and to help it : there is, I am sure, so much compassion in the human mind, that few could suffer themselves to pass by it unregarding. How much rather then should we reach out our hands to the relief of many of our fellow-creatures, many of the softer and more defenceless sex, fallen into the pit of extreme distress, without any hand to relieve, and with but few hearts to compassionate.---And if unrelieved, speedily to perish in the utmost misery, and to breathe out from polluted bodies more polluted souls, into a world of utter and everlasting woe !---Who then would not exert all their efforts to save such bodies, to snatch such souls from horror unspeakable !

This we are convinced, will be the amiable conduct and proceeding of those of the SAME SEX, for whom we now plead ; and who, we are satisfied, can never be inattentive

attentive to the welfare, never unaffected by the calamities of their fellow-creatures.—You, who have happily persevered in the pleasing paths of virtue, can best tell the comforts arising from so delightful a conduct; and may easily guess the miseries of a different state. You, who have known the gentle pleadings of passion, can more easily pity them, whom those pleadings have seduced and destroyed. And you, who are possessed of all the sweetneses and delicacies of the tender mind, and happier state, can more easily guess the extreme misery that must arise to a female heart, from the foulness and horror of promiscuous prostitution;—And will, on these accounts, be the more ready to reach out your pitying hand, and save from distress beyond the reach of description, many of your own sex, for whom, till this happy opportunity, no redress was provided.

And while many of you feel the soft yearnings of the mother for the child that was suckled at her breast: while many of you glow with the tender warmth of a sister's love, and the generous affection of a beloved friend and companion; think, oh think of those unhappy mothers, who late were weeping over the daughters dear to them as a right eye, and nearer than the strings that hold the heart---of those sisters, those friends, who were lamenting over their friends and their sisters, lost, as it seemed, beyond all possibility of hope; oh, think of the joy, which many of them now feel, many have lately felt,

many, we trust, will hereafter feel, on the recovery of the child, of the friend, that was *dead*, that was *lost* ! And as you wish to diffuse such blessedness, for your beloved offsprings sake, join in the good work, and do all you can, to wipe the tears, from these aged and afflicted eyes ; and approve yourselves at once compassionate to your fellow-creatures, and grateful to your Saviour and your God.

Your concurrence, MY BRETHREN, in this beneficent design may reasonably be expected to the utmost. For *generosity* alone would not suffer us to be wanting in any endeavours for the advantage of that sex, to which life owes so much of its sweetness, and felicity : to which we are indebted for the greatest and choicest of earthly comforts from the cradle to the grave : from whose tender and virtuous endearments, this world, otherwise lonely and afflicting, gathers what of sweetness and serenity is found in it.

Motives of *honour* too should certainly much influence many : and those more especially who have been instrumental in the undoing, or means of leading any into the path of destructive pleasures. If such reflect at all, the bitter upbraidings of conscience will soon convince them that they cannot exert themselves too much, or too much endeavour to repair the ruin they have wrought.—For only in the silent hour, when passion is hushed, and reason will hear, suppose the wretched unfortunate introduc'd to misery

fery, to disease, to death, and now about to perish in extreme distress, suppose you heard her thus expostulating—

“ See to what thy unbridled passion, and seducing lust hath
 “ brought me ! Late gay in beauty and elegant in charms,
 “ thy heart was captivated, and every art was used to win
 “ and to destroy me.—Thou didst prevail, and I was un-
 “ done ! and soon, unkind and cruel, thy passion fated,
 “ I was abandon’d, and left to all the extremity of woe !
 “ Now see the sad end of thy triumph—Oh look upon
 “ me, and see what cause thou hast to exult ! Behold
 “ these wretched tatters, which scarcely cover my diseased
 “ limbs, where are the remains of their former loveliness ?
 “ See, my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth with
 “ hunger and with anguish. But worst of all, my soul is tor-
 “ mented with every sorrow ; dire consciousness of my past
 “ misdoings torments and wracks my heart---Oh see me
 “ hopeless and abandon’d---look and repent and amend
 “ thy ways ! See body and soul in early youth consign’d
 “ the one to a severe temporal ; the other,---mercy, mercy
 “ sweet father !---the other to an eternal death.”

Oh then as you are men, and if ever you have been so unfortunate as to be the fatal causes of such sorrow, now by sincere repentance, labour to obtain the great Redeemer’s pardon ; and by a ready assistance of this Charity, calculated for the relief of such deserted sufferers, endeavour to make the best amends, you are able, for your fault.

And

And to conclude ; As you are *Christians*, unite in the good design : for it is intended to promote that work, for which your compassionate Saviour died, the salvation of Sinners. And you cannot be Christians, if you follow not your master's example.

As you are *Parents*, whenever you view the children of your bosom, the daughters like lovely flowers blooming around you ; consider how often that very beauty hath prov'd a fatal snare to its possessor : Oh consider how much seducers throng around, whose rank passions have no law, and whose barbarous lusts have no mercy. And while you are thereby mov'd to the more diligent implantation of every Virtue in the minds of your own children : let generous sympathy touch your hearts ; and join to wipe the tear from the aged father's eye, to prevent the hoary head from going down to the grave in sorrow, by liberally aiding this charity ; which so many fathers may have cause to bless : and which, I am pleas'd to be able to observe to you, hath already been the happy means to dry some aged eyes, and to revive some languishing parents lives.

As you are *members* of the *civil community*, and as you wish to wipe off any disgrace from the state and polity, unite in this laudable undertaking ; which we hope may tend, thro' the zeal of good men, and the vigilance of magistrates, in due season, to wash away that nuisance of our times, the pollution of our streets : in which surely and
in

in every undertaking that may *tend* to remove it, we should join hand and heart, if we wish to preserve in innocence and Virtue, our children, our servants, our dependants of whatsoever sort : if we wish to prevent unspeakable distress, and the most cruel injury, which too often the virtuous and guiltless have found, from the dire contagion of this promiscuous defilement.

And since, blessed be God, amidst the many evils too justly complain'd of, and the many depravities too notoriously reigning, benevolence and charity seem yet not to be wanting amongst us ; let us endeavour to promote these excellent virtues, as much as we may, upon the foundation of Christ's blessed gospel, and in imitation of his compassionate and heavenly temper. And while with sincere hearts, each in our generation studies to advance the good of mankind ; let us always keep in view that great, that important hour, when every thing here below shall dissolve and vanish from our sight : and we ourselves stand at that awful judgment seat, where every external accommodation will be remov'd ; where no regard will be had to place or to rank : but they only shine with most distinguish'd favour and happiness who have most distinguish'd themselves in this short state of trial, by works of benevolence, humanity, and compassion, springing from an unfeigned affiance on the all complete and meritorious sacrifice of an incarnate GOD.

To

To whose praise may we all live here below: for whose sake may we be zealous in this and in every other good work; and for whose merits may we all finally hear the applauding sentence,

IN AS MUCH AS YE DID IT UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YE DID IT UNTO ME.

COME YE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, RECEIVE THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD.



